"The Truth shall make you FREE."—Christ.

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ENGLAND THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

THE MEMORABLE STORY OF MISTRESS MARGERY LOVEL.

I, Margery Lovel, being now nigh upon three score and ten, have, by sundry most dear friends, been asked to put down in pen and ink something concerning the troubles which befel me during the wicked reign of Queen Mary; and I do, right cheerfully, address me to the task, hoping thereby to show the more plainly how great and manifold are the blessings we enjoy under our gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, in the forty-third year of whose most happy reign I write. Of my early days I will say nought, save that I was brought up by a godly father, who, to mine exceeding grief, I did lose at the age of fourteen years. It doth not beseem me to speak ill of my mother, but this much I may say, that her heart was too much set upon this world for marrying again after my father's death, she and her husband did not only neglect the public ministration of the Word in the reign of King Edward, of blessed memory, but did follow the evil fashion of the day in Queen Mary's time, by going to mass. After her second marriage, my mother's heart turned against me, and I, to escape much cruel handling, was fain, oftentimes, to tarry many days with one Mistress Lewis, a worthy matron, who dwelled at the little village of Hackney, about three miles from my mother's house, on London bridge. Mistress Lewis was an exceeding good woman, and albeit I then thought lightly of religious matters, she greatly cherished me for my dear father's sake, and for the sake also of her nephew Hal, whom folk did call my sweetheart. Hal and I, of a truth, loved each other passing well, but yet at times I grieved sore in my heart, fearing that he loved but the face which my looking-glass showed me; for he being a pious, godly young man, and wondrous wise and learned withal, methought he must esteem me scarce worthy of him, and I liked not he should think that, though I knew right well that it was true.

At the length I did truly think his love for me was growing cold, it was so long time since he had been to see me; and one evening as I sat knitting hosen in Mistress Lewis's parlour, I did ponder much what the thing might be in which he found me wanting. I had left off knitting for to wipe away a tear from mine eye, when lo! the door opened, something suddenly, and Hal stood before me. I had not looked for to see him at that hour of the night (for he dwelled near Finsbury Fields, being a haberdasher by trade), so my heart beat very quickly, albeit I looked up at him with an unmoved countenance. "Good even, Master Lovel," quoth I, holding out my hand. "Good even, sweet Margery," said he, "I fear I startled thee." "Nay, that did you not," I said (though I scarce spoke true), "I ought to have expected to see you to-day, for this morning, while we breakfasted, a coal flew out on to the hearth, and folk say that this fortells a stranger to be coming." "Call you *me* a stranger?" he cried. "Of a truth you have seemed so for these many days past," answered I. Whereat he sighed, and there fell on us a silence, of which wearying, I cried out, "How wondrous dark it grows! sure 'tis nigh supper time."

"It hath, of a truth, been dark to me

of late," he said, "and though it must needs be bright to me now, 'twill soon be dark again." "You speak in riddles," said I, "but I love not riddles myself. Pry'thee have you seen your good aunt yet, Master Hal?" "Yea," he answered, "t'was she that let me in, and told me I should find thee in this parlour alone. Margery, I am come to tell thee that I am going across seas, and perchance may see thy face no more." Ah me! it was like as if a thunder-bolt had struck me. Howbeit I did answer, with marvellous quietness, "Then, Hal, I must needs bid you farewell." "Dost thou not care then whither I am going," he cried. "Nay, why should I, so long as you be happy," I said. "You go for your own pleasure, I trow?" Whereupon he broke forth something vehemently, and I was no little confounded to learn that he was fleeing from those cruel opposers of the truth, who were stirred up to their evil deeds by that exceeding ungodly man, Bishop Bonner. "It is noised abroad," said he, "that I will have nought to do with the Popish mass; so the dogs have been let loose after me, Margery; I hope they have lost scent of me now; but had I tarried longer in London, I should by this time, mayhap, have been on my way to Lambeth Palace, and 'tis but a short march thence to Smithfield, as thou well knowest." "Oh, Hal, Hal!" I cried, "wherefore do you so hazard your life? Go to mass, pry'thee go to mass—what harm will it do thee?" "What!" he said, "wouldest thou have me imperil my soul by doing ought against conscience?" I well nigh trembled, he spoke so very terribly, and hanging my foolish head, durst not answer him. Anon, he spoke. "Wherefore, Margery, dost thou not more dearly love the truth? Thou hadst a godly father, who oftentimes took thee to hear good preaching." "Yea, oftentimes," I said (right glad, silly maid! to find my tongue again); "and I have to thank those same sermons for many a knock on the head. I being but young then, and the sermons exceedingly long, was fain, at times, to fall asleep, and then my father shook and shogged me, and my mother hit me sore with the long handle of her fan; albeit, I knew right well she had much ado to keep herself awake, and in truth no marvel, for the preachers were for the most part wondrous hard to understand. I thought it good then to listen to them; but now the Queen saith they were false teachers, and I care not to set myself up against her judgment, troubling myself with matters that, perchance, do not concern me." "Oh, Margery!" quoth Hal, "I would rather have gone with thee to the stake than have heard thee speak thus lightly. Poor wench! how thou art blinded!" I had a mind to be angry, but burst out a crying instead, for I felt that my understanding in truth was darkened, yet I knew not where to look for light. "Who will teach me?" said I, "oh, who will teach me to love the truth!" Whereupon Hal seeing my sore grief, did take my hand and bid me, right tenderly, seek counsel from his aunt, "for she," saith he, "doth love thee well, and would fain make thee such a one as herself." I liked not that he should esteem his aunt to be so much better than me, for though, as aforesaid, a very good woman, she was of severe aspect, and something grave and austere withal; so I drawing away mine hand from Hal, did wipe away my tears, and determine within myself not to do as he bade me. Ere we had time for more words, Mistress Lewis coming into the parlour, did pray me to go and prepare the supper; she, on some pretext, having sent her little maid to sleep at her own home that night, fearing lest she should discover Hal, who, with all secrecy, had been let into the house. I was wondrous quick in getting the supper ready, thinking most foolishly that Mistress Lewis and Hal must needs be talking about me the while; howbeit, when I brought it in, I found them to be engaged in more profitable discourse, she bidding him to be of good cheer, and to count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. The while we supped, Hal told me somewhat concerning his plans. He had come to Hackney but to bid us farewell; and ere the day dawned he purposed leaving us, and making his way across the fields back to London, to a place called Leon's Quay, where one whom he held to be a trusty friend had promised to meet him, and bring a bag of gold—this same gold being in exchange for Hal's goods, of which he was

to have the selling. Hal then meant to take barge at the quay, and to go down the river to Legh, a little port on the Essex coast, where he purposed tarrying till he could find some craft that might take him across seas to Holland. He strove to speak right cheerfully, and good Mistress Lewis did answer in like manner; but as for me I durst scarce so much as open my lips, lest I should fall a-crying, and I had no mind to show Hal how very sore I grieved for his going away, thinking, most wrongfully, all the while, that sure he might have stayed and gone to mass for love of me. Having no thought of bed that night, we sat over our supper till the candle was well-nigh burnt out, and Hal remarking thereon, I had just fetched another, when lo! there comes a loud knocking against the house door. "Alack!" cried Mistress Lewis, "alack! Hal, poor lad, they have come for thee!" "I know it," he saith, with as brave a countenance as ever I saw. "But fear not, good aunt, I'll go to them and then they will not harm Margery, nor thee." "Go to them, forsooth!" cried I, "you shall not so do. Get out of the back door into the fields, and flee for your life. I'll keep them in parley till you are safe." He cried out nay, I should have nought to do with such rude fellows; and he put his arm round me for to keep me, but I, thrusting him away, did run up stairs to good Mistress Lewis's bed-chamber, the window of which I opened, calling out to know who was there? The moon was shining bright, and I saw two ill-favoured men standing below, who answered me that they were the watch, and bade me open to them, in the Queen's name. "In the Queen's name," quoth I, "what is it from her ye come?" They answered, "Yea." "Marry," said I, "you do well to tell me that." "Why so?" quoth they. "Because," I said, "I should scarce have thought to look at you that you were fresh from court." Whereat they laughed, and one of them called out that I was a witty little maid; but t'other said in a drunken voice, "Let us in, we tell'ee, let us in, "We are the Queen's lawful watch, and we'll lay the door on the floor if thou dost not come to us." "I'll come to you and welcome," saith I, "but I would fain know why you are come at this ill hour." Howbeit they would say no more; and I growing something frightened, did run to Mistress Lewis, crying, "Is he safe?" She answered, "Yes." "Then," saith I, "haste thee to thy chamber, and make as if thou wast preparing for bed. Leave the rest to me." She did as I prayed, and I without more ado let the men into the house, nothing doubting that Hal was by this time half-way across the meadows which lay at the back of the house. The men, when they entered, did prove to be so muddled in their heads through drink, that they scarce themselves knew for whom they were come. Howbeit, though they could hardly walk straight, they began to search the house; and I going after them with a candle in my hand, did talk with them right merrily all the while, not suffering them to see that I was well nigh dead with fear. Nought could they find, worth their taking, save only a canvas bag, sewed up in the mattress of Mistress Lewis's bed, and this they vowed they would carry away; and when she most pitifully did pray them not, they turned upon her, saying she was a bad woman to be up at hours when all honest folk were in bed, and that seeing she was drunken (for being drunken themselves they held her so to be) they would not only have her money, but must needs take her straightway to the cage. I did pray them not to be so exceeding cruel, but they would not hearken to me; and after they had searched the house and garden, and had found not Hal, they most mercilessly did carry off this venerable matron to the cage, there to abide, at the least, till morning. I being thus left alone in the house, did at first fall to weeping and lamenting for Hal, but soon my tears stopped, and my very blood did freeze in my veins through fear, for lo! there was a knocking again, not as aforetime at the house-door, but like as though it came from the room where I was. I thinking that sure it was some ghost, or maybe old Goody Jones coming down the chimney on her broomstick (and, albeit, she long afterwards died quietly in her bed, the gossips of Hackney did say she could do such things, and worse), durst not so much as cry out, "What's that." Eftsoons, the door of a large, fair cupboard, that stood in the parlour,

began to shake, and a voice, I knew right well, cried out, "Margery! let me out, for mercy's sake!" "Oh, Hal! is it thou?" I cried. "Yea," he said, "let me out, sweet life, I'm dying here." I had much ado to find the cupboard key, which Mistress Lewis had for safety thrown into a hamper; and when I had found it, the lock went terrible hard, but I kept up his heart, saying, "'Tis turning, Hal, 'tis turning," and so in the end got the door open. "I hurt my hand sore in so doing, but minded not that, thinking only of Hal, who came out looking wondrous pale and bleak; in truth he had all but died through want of air. "Oh, Hal," said I, as soon as he could speak, "wherefore didst thou hide there instead of fleeing?" "Because, sweetheart," quoth he, "I knew not thou hadst such a ready wit as to keep the men so long in parley." With that he falls to thanking me very tenderly for having saved his life, while I, foolish maid, could do nought but cry with joy and grief. At the length, "Hal," saith I, "thou must not tarry here. Mayhap these naughty men will be coming back after they have put thy poor aunt in the cage. While it is yet night, flee, for pity's sake." "Yea, I must needs flee," he said, and withal began to move towards the door, like one that did dream. All on a sudden, back he turned. "Sweetheart," he cried, in a lamentable voice, "I will leave thee now; but oh! can I bear to leave thee for ever?" "If thou tarriest here they will kill thee," said I, unless in truth thou wilt go to mass." He put his hand before his eyes, and stood silent a little space; then, he said, as though speaking within himself, "I thank the Lord I have conquered!" "Thou art going, Hal?" said I, as soon as I durst speak. "Yea," he answered, "it must be so. Think not I do not love thee, sweet, but I must needs love conscience more." I then seeing that it was wasting breath to gainsay him, did, with mine own hand, unlock the back door, which opened, as aforesaid, upon the fields. "See, Hal," quoth I, "the moon has well nigh set, and all looks dark and quiet; mayhap if you run for it, you may yet reach Leon's Quay before daybreak." "The Lord lighten thee, and comfort thee, my most dear Margery," saith he. "Amen!" I answered, and could say no more; I was well nigh choked with tears. Whereupon we taking of each other a tender farewell, most sorrowfully did part; but my belief is that Hal's prayer was answered, in a way which, shortly, you shall see.

Hal being nowhere to be found, Mistress Lewis after spending one doleful night in the cage, was let loose therefrom, and except for the loss of her fifteen pounds, she did suffer no more harm. Howbeit my mother and her husband hearing that Hal was now accounted a heretic, did send for me straightway for to come home, and did forbid me, with many threats, to have ought henceforth to do with him or any of his kin. Moreover my mother did often make my flesh creep, by telling of the poor wretches that were burnt at Smithfield, and saying (whensoever she could not learn their names) that Hal very like was among them, and that he had got his deserts at last. All this so wrought upon me that I pined away thro' very grief, and for the saving of my life was sent down to Derby, a most long and wearisome journey, there to tarry at the least a twelvemonth with my grandmother who dwelt there. I loved not my grandmother, and she on her part did show me great severity; though, save for making me attend her daily to mass, she at the first let me have my liberty, being well pleased to be rid of my company whensoever she could. So I, like a melancholy ghost, did take a sad delight in wandering forth alone into the fields, pondering many things in my heart, and desiring to find some anchor of hope whereon to lean, for lo! I had none on earth or in heaven. One day while I walked I came to a stile on the which a young woman sat knitting, with her face turned towards the setting sun. I marvelled that she could bear his wondrous brightness, till looking at her more closely I perceived that she was blind. She was as simple a woman to look at as any one might see; but I could not but mark her something attentively, for while she knitted her lips did move very fast as though she were talking to herself, or haply, were saying her prayers. I then treading very softly over the grass did draw

nigh her, and standing close beside her (albeit she knew it not) did to my wonderment find that she was telling a tale the like of which I had never heard before for beauty. She hardly had finished when a little dog that lay at her feet did, waking up, begin to bark furiously at me, whereupon she, feeling about her with her hands, cried out, "Who's there?" "Pry'thee do not be angry with me," said I, "but I have been standing here a little space, listening to your pretty tale". "Methought none could hear me!" she said; and in her haste to flee me, rose, and would have fallen from the stile had I not caught her. "I know you not!" she cried; "oh, why are you come here to listen to me?" "Nay," said I, "I meant no harm, and sure you have done nought of which you need be ashamed". She then grew somewhat quieted, and anon began to feel my face very gently with her hand, I smiling all the while, and asking her what manner of woman she held me to be. "I trow you are young," she said, "your voice is young and very soft, and you have cheeks as round as my brother Roger's." "Hast thou a brother then," said I; she answered yea, and that she dwelt with him and did help to turn his ropes, for he was by trade a rope-maker. She told me moreover that she had been born blind, and was now of the age of twenty-two years. "My parents are dead," said she, "but Roger and I are exceeding happy together, and he would grieve sore if ought of harm should befal me;"—so pry'thee do not betray me, I learnt that chapter a great while ago, and repeated it now but for mine own comfort." "What!" cried I, "sure t'was not a chapter from the Bible that thou wast repeating? Oh, if it were for pity's sake tell it me again!" She thought at first I did but mock her, but finding that I was in very deed a poor, blind, ignorant creature, did most reverently repeat to me the blessed parable of the Prodigal Son. We then sitting together on the stile fell into such heavenly discoursing that we forgot how far the day was spent, and I had at the length to hasten home with all speed, knowing that a rebuke and haply a box on the ear awaited me for tarrying out so long. I did receive my due, but I heeded it but little, so full of joy was I to find that religion was not the fearful thing I had held it to be, but was in truth an anchor of hope for the soul. Joan Waste, for that was the blind woman's name, dwelt not far from my grandmother's house, and in consequence thereof I, from this time, did go very frequently for to see her. She greatly loved my coming, and I sitting beside her while she knitted hosen and sleeves (whereby she helped to earn her bread), did persuade her to repeat to me sundry chapters from the New Testament, the listening to which did make me weep for joy and penitence. She had been well taught, having been under the ministry of godly Dr. Taylor, and had besides, in the reign of king Edward, of blessed memory, oftentimes resorted to one John Hart, a prisoner in the Common Hall, Derby, for debt, who very diligently did read and expound the Scriptures to her, teaching her some of the chapters that she knew by heart. One day she saith to me, "Mistress Margery can you read?" "Yea of a truth," saith I, smiling, "and right well, folks say." "Then," saith she "I will tell you a secret." Whereupon she straightway did tell me that she a good while ago having saved out of her labour so much money as would buy her a New Testament, had got one to be provided for her, which she did keep in all secrecy. "But," saith she, "I will fetch it now, if so be you will read it to me. Only, an it please you, tell me first how many chapters will you read me for a penny?" I could not but smile at her for thinking in her simplicity that I should take ought from her; but she very gravely did acquaint me that she had oftentimes paid folks for reading the scriptures to her; and I was not little abashed to think that whereas I had spent my money on fine 'kerchiefs, sweet-washed gloves and such like vanities, she had been ready to part with her all, for to buy the field containing the hidden treasure. From this time I, for about the space of three months, did come to her as often as I durst, to read to her from her Testament. But alack! there came a day when I found her looking wonderous pale and sorrowful; and when I asked the reason

thereof, she speaking soft in my ear, saith, "Mistress Margery, is it a fearful thing to be burnt alive?" I could not but shudder, thinking of my most dear Hal, and she feeling me so to do, did put her two arms round my neck, crying out, "They say the Bishop has a mind to burn me! Oh, good Mistress Margery, pry'thee save me from him!" Poor wench! I knew right well I could do nought to save her, so I fell to kissing her, and weeping with her, saying that sure none would harm an innocent creature like her. But she went on crying very bitterly, till her little dog seeing she was in sore grief did put his two paws on her knee, seeking to lick her face if so be that he might comfort her; sure, t'was a pitiful sight to see the dumb beast and the poor helpless maid sorrowing as it were together; but methought as I looked upon them what a marvelous thing love was, and that sure He who had made even brute beasts to love must in Himself be exceeding loving; whereat taking heart I did put her in remembrance that the Lord would not send her more than He would give her strength to bear, but that if it were to be as she feared, He would either lighten the flame or enable her to endure it. She then, greatly comforted, did lay her head upon my shoulder, praying me that I without fail would come to her wedding—meaning thereby her most cruel martyrdom. I answered yea, if she desired it, I would surely come; after which we fell into much sweet discoursing, and when I left her, she of a certainty was braver in heart than I. Now, how it happened I know not, but my grandmother did hear, I suppose, of my visits to Joan, for from this day forward she suffered me no more to walk out alone, but kept me close by her side; and I (albeit I durst not complain), did at this chafe greatly, desiring to know how it fared with the poor wench, and lamenting the loss of her sweet company. One morning the while I stood working with my needle beside my grandmother's chair (for she never suffered me to sit so much as on a low stool in her presence), there comes in a neighbour, one Mistress Cicely Heyward by name, whom folks called the busy-body of Derby. She and my grandmother fell a-talking, but I, thinking of Hal, did not hearken to their discourse, till on a sudden I heard Mistress Heyward say, "I would our good Bishop could put a speedy end to all these vile creatures. 'Twas but t'other day a blind woman was brought up before him, a miserable ignorant creature, scarce twenty-two years old, and yet she was so puffed up with pride that she, forsooth! must needs set herself up, for knowing better than he!" "I have not heard of this," said my grandmother; "and pray what may be the name of this wretch?" "Nay, that I do not know," said Mistress Heyward; "save only that she is nought but a rope-maker's daughter. She seemed at first mighty obstinate, but when they did very justly threaten her, she showed some love of life, saying that if the Bishop would answer for her at the Judgment Day, that what he taught was true, she, maybe would hearken to him. Howbeit, Dr. Draicot, the Bishop's Chancellor, you know, did cry out, "My Lord, you may in no ways answer for a heretic." Whereupon this proud hussey said she could say no more, but must let them do with her as they would; and so she righteously was condemned." "Child," cried my grandmother, who all this while had been watching me, "what ails thee? Thou lookest wondrous pale," and with that she did throw me a cushion for to kneel upon, as she was wont to do when she saw me like to drop through weariness of standing. I knelt down, for I felt more dead than alive; and when Mistress Hayward was gone, I no longer able to contain myself, did humbly confess to my grandmother that I knew Joan Waste right well, and counted her a most godly woman. Nothing moved by my tears, my grandmother on hearing this fell into an exceeding rage, and did order me straightway to my own room, and there did keep me sundry days, suffering no one to go near me. Howsoever, my captivity was to me less doleful than she supposed, for I had possessed myself of a hidden treasure—to wit the New Testament of Joan, which the poor maid had bid me carry away with me the last time I saw her. In this most precious book I exercised myself both day and night, hiding it very swiftly whenever Prue, the maid,

did come for to bring me my dinner or supper. I saw nought of my grandmother till one even when she entering the room, asked me, something suddenly, whether I were sorry for me fault." "I am sorry," saith I, "to have angered you, madam." "That's well," quoth she, "and thou wilt now see what ill company thou hast kept, for Joan Waste is to suffer to morrow as an obstinate heretic." "Nay, if she be!" cried I, "'twill be the foulest, wickedest murder that ever was!" "Rail not against thy betters," cried my grandmother, withal giving me a box on the ear, which something angered me, or else of a surety I should straightway have broken out into loud wailings and lamentations. "Speak not against thy betters, child, the Bishop doth adjudge her worthy to die, and so also doth the Queen. Dr. Draicot is to preach a sermon before her to-morrow, at All Saints' Church, after which she is to be burnt, somewhere near to Windmill Pits. Prue did ask leave for to go to see her, but I had not a mind to spare her, seeing that it is but a little while since she went to a hanging." Ah, me! I, who all this while had been hoping against hope, did now call to mind how that I had promised Joan to be present at her wedding, and by this same promise holding myself bound, I, greviously against my will, did pray my grandmother that I might at the least go to the sermon. She, well pleased at the request, very cheerfully did answer yea, and that she herself would bear me company. She moreover told me that I now should have my liberty, for she doubted not that with so terrible an ensample before me, I should amend me of mine evil ways; and after giving me her hand for to kiss, she, with a smiling countenance did leave me, bidding me to sleep well, so that I might be up betimes on the morrow. Howbeit, I scarce need say that I did not so much as go to bed, but did weep and pray for Joan the whole night through, dreading sore the dawning of the day.

All Saints' Church was already something full when we entered it, but my grandmother being held in much repute as a good Catholic Papist, did get places for herself and me very nigh the pulpit, and there we sat some little space waiting till Joan was brought in. Never to my dying day shall I forget the most sweet looks of that innocent martyr as with blind eyes up-lifted and a face that was exceeding pale yet calm withal, she did walk up the church, feeling before her so pitifully with her hand that she moved to compassion the rude gaoler and the bailiffs that followed her. But not so did she move that cruel minister of the Pope, Dr. Draicot, for he presently mounting the pulpit, before which she was placed, did preach a sermon most horrible to hear. He said that she was as blind in her soul as she was in her eyes, and that she in the world to come would suffer yet more grievously than she was about to do in this. I had much ado to keep from crying out against him, and did marvel much at my grandmother, who listened to him very reverently, from time to time shogging me, as if to say, "I pray thee hearken to this, and take warning while thou canst." Well a day! this wicked sermon at the length was ended, and Dr. Draicot, forbidding the people to pray for her, did deliver the blessed martyr for to be burnt. In the stir that then was made I, escaping from my grandmother, pressed forward to the church door, and stood foremost among the people that was gathered together to see Joan led away. She holding fast by her brother's hand, and repeating such prayer as she before had learnt, did presently draw nigh me, not knowing me to be near, but when I cried out "Joan, Joan! the Lord be with thee most sweet Joan!" straightway she turned her head. "Mistress Margery," said she, in a right gladsome voice, smiling the while with marvellous sweetness, "good Mistress Margery, is it thou?" And with that she, begging for my prayers, did stretch out her hand to touch me. I would fain have fallen on her neck and kissed her, but the bailiffs thrust me away; and I sinking to the ground in a deep swoon was borne to the house of Mistress Cicely Heyward, who lived hard by the church. My grandmother, something affrighted, did hasten to me, but had much ado to bring me to my senses again, and even then I was like one distracted till tidings were brought me that Joan had entered upon her rest. Alack, poor Joan! I could

weep even now when I think of her! But wherefore should I weep? since she of a surety will no more weep for herself. Yet, in truth, it was a foul deed, and folk did say it called for signal judgments on them that wrought it—more especially on Dr. Draicot (who going, after his sermon was ended to the Inn, did sleep very peacefully all the time of her execution); but, methinks, 'tis not for us poor sinners to say who among us is worthy of judgment, and Joan, sweet soul, I verily believe, will not be loath to forgive her persecutors, even in Heaven. And now, concerning this most faithful servant of the Lord, I must needs say that worthy Master Fox hath thought good to speak of her in his rare book of martyrs, whereof I am right glad, for sure there are many more notable martyrs than she who yet will stand below her in the Courts above. As for me, her excellent ensample did so inflame me, that I henceforth would have nought to do with Popish practices, but would read my Testament openly, notwithstanding that my grandmother did in consequence thereof make me suffer more than I shall here tell. At the length she, by her furiousness, did one day compel me to accompany her to mass; but repentance for mine own weakness did so overwhelm me, that when the time for the sprinkling of the holy water came, I, instead of reverently kneeling, did rise and turn my back upon it, saying within myself the while, "Oh, Hal, Hal! would thou could see me now, Hal!" which thought, together with some more holy ones, did so strengthen me, that I was like to weep for very joy. I saw the priest look very furiously at me; and the following day, as I was standing before the kitchen fire, turning a pan-cake, Prue, the maid, comes running to me with a doleful countenance, "Oh, Mistress Margery," cries she, "here's an ill-looking fellow come to take you to prison." Whereupon follows my grandmother, sore lamenting, "Alack! Margery, what will thy mother say? The sumner has brought a citation for thee, to come before the Bishop, for despising of the holy sacraments." I did not swoon as I had done when poor Joan was led away, but kept an unmoved countenance, and before I left the fire-place, I would needs turn the pan-cake again (on which deed I prided myself afterwards, not a little, though I now think it savoured of vainglory and foolishness). "Must I go with the sumner immediately?" quoth I. "Yea, that thou must," said my grandmother. "Oh, Margery, I told thee how it would be. Whatever may befal thee, I, at the least, have given thee warning." This, indeed, was true, yet I felt it at the time to be very sorry comfort. I have not much to say concerning my examination before the Bishop. No one to my knowledge did take mine answers down; and I being in some trouble of mind at the time, do but ill remember what I said to him, or he to me. Moreover, I was myself as it were, but scarce out of darkness; so when they questioned me concerning my belief, I could only say I knew nought of divinity, save what I had learnt from the Gospels, but that I trusted I did hold fast to what they taught me; and that though I could not argue yet, by God's grace I was well content to die. Whereupon the Bishop greatly threatened me, but seeing (as he saith) that I was young and comely, he was not willing to deal severely with me; and after much discoursing betwixt him and Dr. Draicot, he did send me to gaol, to be kept there a certain space, and then to appear before him again. At my second examination I waxed something bolder; and the Bishop growing angry, did presently deliver me to the sheriffs and gentlemen for to be dealt with as an obstinate heretic. The while my sentence was read, I stood bolt upright, pressing my hand against a rare lock of Hal's hair (which I wore in secret round my neck), and thinking within myself that t'was a joyful thing to suffer for the truth; but afterwards, when I got back to my noisome prison, and it came upon my mind that I in very deed was to be brought to a most cruel death, a great horror fell over me. Ah me! it was a doleful time! I seeming suddenly to have let go of the anchor of hope, did, for the space of many weeks, pass whole days and nights without sleep, refusing to be comforted, albeit sundry godly persons came most Christianly to visit me. The writ, "*De heretece comburendo*," was sent

down for me from London; but the sheriff to whom I was committed would not have me executed during his shrievality, and I found I was like to live three months' longer, at the end of which time he would go out of office. Those same months were already past, when just before the cold weather set in, I fell sick, and one morn when I would have risen, was fain to lay me down again on the heap of straw that served me for my poor bed. My head did ache very terribly, but I heeded not my bodily sickness, for all my peace of mind on a sudden had come back to me, and bethinking myself that I, like a little child, was safe in my Father's hands, I felt now well content to bear whatever might befal me. At the length my fever began to wax wondrous high, so that I took little heed of what was passing around me; and albeit there was one day something of a stir made in the prison, I cared not so much as to ask what it might portend. About the same time, moreover, I did see strange forms and faces about my bed—some horrible, some passing sweet. At the first I knew right well that they were only fantasies, but soon I had no power for to drive them away; and what next befel me I cannot tell, knowing nought till I woke, as it seemed, from a long sleep, and did, in waking, hear a voice say, "She hath in truth been faithful!" I knew not where I was, and had scarce strength to turn my head, but methought it was the angels speaking, and I myself began to say (I know not why), "Faithful, faithful." At that another voice, less sweet than the first, cried "Hush!" and I heard some footsteps stealing, as it were, very softly away; then a hand was laid upon my brow, and I, opening my eyes, did see one Mistress Masham, a discreet matron, who oftimes had visited me in prison, standing beside the bed, and gazing at me very tenderly. "Dost thou know me, dear Margery?" saith she. "I thought they were come for me," said I, scarce heeding her. "Who were come?" quoth she. "The angels," I said, "and Hal with them," (for this truly had been my first thought). "Nay," said she, "thou must be content to tarry awhile longer on earth." Whereat I sighed, and then all that had befallen me came back upon my mind, and I would fain have asked where I was, for I saw now I was no longer in my noisome prison. Howbeit, Mistress Masham forbade me to speak, and after she had given me a cordial to strengthen me, I like a wearied child did fall asleep again. When I awoke it was not night as it before had been, but broad day; and I saw that Mistress Masham was no more alone, but was discoursing with a man who stood at the foot of the bed. His back was towards me, and I thought he was the new sheriff who, learning I was like to live, had come to fix a certain day for my execution. I lay at the first quite still, but presently hearing Mistress Masham say, "I scarce dare tell her." Anon, I cried out as loud as I could, "Be not afeard for me, I would fain know all." Whereupon the man turning round very swiftly, did fall on his knees beside the bed, for lo! he was none other than Hal. Ah me! methought for very joy I did but dream; but he calling me "his most sweet life," did take my hand in his, and I feeling his tears falling fast upon me, knew of a certainty that I was awake. Howbeit I never having seen him weep before, did begin to think that I was in truth very shortly to be burnt, so meaning to comfort him, I saith, "Be of good cheer, Hal." "I am of good cheer, sweetheart," saith he. "The Lord will strengthen me," said I; "I am not afraid to go to Him. It is but as thou once said thou wouldst have it to be." "Oh, Margery!" he cried; then stopping suddenly looked at Mistress Masham, who saith, "What wouldst thou say, Margery, if the Queen did not will thee to die?" "What mean you by that?" said I. "I may not and I will not recant." "Nay," said she, "Master Lovel himself would have thee die sooner than that thou shouldest." I knew she spoke true, but withal looked very wonderingly at Hal, who smiled on me with exceeding gladness. "The Queen willed that Joan should die," I said, "wherefore then—" I could say no more my heart did so beat betwixt hope and fear. "Queen Mary hath no more power over life and death," saith Mistress Masham. "Margery, she is dead!" "Dead!" I said. "Yea!" said Hal; then starting suddenly to his

feet, he waved his right hand over his head, crying out, "Long live Elizabeth our gracious Queen!"

My most dear Hal, like me, had suffered much (howbeit more worthily far than I) for the sake of the truth. The night that he fled from his aunt's house, he, under cover of the darkness, did in safety reach Leon's Quay, arriving there about four in the morning, but his friend did not come to meet him, and he, after waiting for him as long as he durst, took barge down the river to Legh, hoping that, perhaps, he would join him there. But alack! this naughty man did keep to himself all the profit of Hal's goods, and poor Hal fearing pursuit, and not having withal to pay his passage across seas to Holland, was fain to hire himself as sailor to a small trading craft; and although the faculty was not one he had before frequented, he being bred to better things, nevertheless he did good service, as they have often witnessed to me that were of his company. After more than a year was past, he, for love of me, did adventure himself on shore again; and scarce had he landed when tidings reached him that the Queen was dead. Whereupon he, hasting to Hackney, did seek out his good aunt, whom he did find safe and well, though grieving sore for me, for she had heard that I lay in the Common Hall, Derby, under sentence of death. Immediately that she had told Hal thereof, he straightway set out for Derby, journeying so exceeding hard that he did reach that said town in seven days—Love, as he was wont to say, having lent to him his wings. When he reached his journey's end, he did find that I (being then nigh at death's door) had been carried to the under-sheriff's house, there to wait till the will of our Sovereign Lady concerning me should be known. The mercy shown to me came well nigh too late; albeit I, the very day after the coming of my Hal, did most marvellously begin to amend, my senses returning to me as I before have told. And now I have but one word more to say, and that is farewell, for you know right well how I married Hal, and lived with him long years of such exceeding happiness, that I scarce knew a single sorrow till two years ago, when he was called to a better Home. Most like I shall not long survive him, but I thank God I have lived to see this day, when the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are no more shut up in the Pope's hand, but are freely given to all who desire to unlock the casket wherein lies the Pearl of great Price; and I pray that our children's children may rightly use their precious blessings, as they sit each under their own vine and their own fig-tree, none making them afraid.

BEATRICE A. JOURDAN.

A FEW REASONS FOR VIGOROUS BENEVOLENT EFFORT TO AID OUR SUFFERING CHURCHES.

WE have always affirmed our views are calculated to make the world practically Christian and truly benevolent; now our suffering churches put this matter to the proof.

We value our faith believing it is calculated to make mankind wiser and better, and this world a happier world; our brethren therefore should be sustained as useful instruments for the diffusion of our views.

We know that other religious denominations are making special and praiseworthy sacrifices to lessen the sufferings within the pale of their churches, while they are at the same time aiding the general charity funds; should we as Unitarians do less than others?

We daily pray "lead us not into temptation," and shall we not as a Christian Church at this time do our utmost to save our brethren from that stringent distress, that pressing poverty, which is a temptation to evil?

Will not the families to whom we now afford relief in such necessity, hand down from generation to generation the kindness shewn them by our churches, and thus perpetuate a remembrance that will continually evoke the spirit of Christianity among them, "brotherly love."

In dispensing charity is it not desirable that it should flow into the best channels for distribution? and what better medium for our gifts than the hands of our ministers who are now in the midst of their suffering flocks.

Is it possible at this time we shall

allow our ministers, members, sunday-school teachers, and their families, to suffer great privations, and some of them to perish, contenting ourselves by some trifling subscription to the general funds, and satisfying our souls with this and some magnanimous talk about our unsectarian spirit?

In this general distress in the North we have an opportunity of doing good unto all; but is there not a special call to relieve those of the same household of faith? And did not the apostle Paul expose himself to great perils for his Christian brethren to bring the contributions of other churches to their aid.

The present emergency calls for speedy effort; the appalling wide-spread distress, the blamelessness of the operatives, the winter upon them, the smallness of relief, the need of food, fire, and clothing, the expenses of house-rent, and the dreary prospect of a long continuance of a want of work, demand of us benevolent organizations that may with regular weekly subscriptions in all our churches, meet the wants of our suffering brethren. Surely the present distress is an appeal to the sympathy of all our churches. What we do, let us do it liberally and do it quickly.

A FEW CASES OF PETTY PERSECUTION AND ANNOYANCE FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE.

I said, "you have not been at chapel for some time, Sarah." She said, with a blush, "No." Her mistress had discovered that she attended the Unitarian Chapel, and strictly and most solemnly forbade her during the time she was in her service to enter the chapel again. "She said, "you may go to any place of worship on a Sunday evening but the Unitarian Chapel. If you intend going there, I forbid you leaving my house for chapel at all. If you go contrary to my orders I will dismiss you from my house without any notice whatever."—This is not a solitary case of servants being precluded from meeting in Unitarian Chapels for worship, and dismissed from the service of the house when they persisted in obeying conscience rather than an intolerant mistress.

A short time ago a young female teacher was expelled from a district school, the clergyman being president, because she went occasionally to the Unitarian Chapel. She was not even expostulated with, but being regarded as tinged with heresy, this summary method was pursued, the board having come to a vote altogether from the influence of the president's dislike to her on this account. It was perfectly understood that the teacher of the school could attend the Established Church, or any place of worship among the Dissenters; but this aggravation of her case—attending the Unitarian Chapel—could not be borne, and so she suffered this petty persecution. We know teachers in distinctly Unitarian schools who belong to other places of worship, and they are respected in the observance of their religious opinions after having properly performed the secular duties of their calling.

We opened a place of worship at a neighbouring town, and gathered together a great number of men who had attended no religious services previous to this. An alarm was raised, and all unfair arts were practised, to draw men off from attending our Sunday meeting. Churchmen were excited at the audacity of their men attending our services; and we knew in one case of a dissenting employer turning off one of his hands because, in face of his master's logic against Unitarianism, he would still attend our meeting on the Sunday. Preachers need not be surprised at losing some of their hearers. It needs a vast amount of moral courage in some cases, more than many men ordinarily have, to brave the annoyances and persecutions they are subjected to for Unitarianism.

We could take our readers to a school where the children are told they will bear the displeasure of their teacher, and stand in jeopardy of a whipping on the Monday, if they go to the Unitarian school or chapel on the Sunday. No such punishment is threatened if they attend any other place of worship on the Sunday. They may play in the streets, they may stop at home, they may do anything without fear of displeasure but go near the Unitarian chapel or school on Sundays.

(To be continued)

THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.

A Sermon, by Rev. Charles Kingsley, of the Church of England.

Mark ii. 15, 16.—"And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him. And when the Scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners they said unto his disciples, 'How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?'"

We cannot wonder at the scribes and Pharisees asking this question. I think that we should most of us ask the same question now, if we saw the Lord Jesus, or even if we saw any good or venerable man, going out of his way to eat and drink with publicans and sinners. We should be inclined to say, as the scribes and Pharisees no doubt said, Why go out of his way to make fellowship with them? to eat and drink with them? He might have taught them—preached to them—warned them of God's wrath against their sins, when he could find them out in the street. Or, even if he could not do that, if he could not find them all together without going into their house, why sit down and eat and drink? Why not say—No, I am not going to join with you in that. I am come on a much more solemn and important errand than eating. I have no time to eat. I must preach to you, ere it be too late. And you would have no appetite to eat if you knew the terrible danger in which your souls are. Besides, however anxious for your souls I am, you cannot expect me to treat you as friends, to make companions of you, and accept your hospitality, while you are living these bad lives. I shall always feel pity and sorrow for you; but I cannot be a table companion with you till you begin to lead very different lives.

Now if the scribes and Pharisees had said that, should we have thought them very unreasonable? For whatsoever kind of sinners the sinners were, these publicans were the very worst and lowest of company. They were not innkeepers, as the word means now; they were a kind of tax-gatherers, but not like ours in England. For, first, these taxes were not taken by the Jewish government, but by the Romans—heathen foreigners who had conquered them, and kept them down by soldiery quartered in their country. So that these publicans, who gathered taxes and tribute for the heathen Cæsar of Rome, from their own countrymen, were traitors to their country, in league with their foreign tyrants, as it were devouring their own flesh and blood; and all the Jews looked on them (and really no wonder) with hatred and contempt. Beside, these publicans did not merely gather the taxes, as they do in free England—they farmed them, compounded for them with the Roman emperor; that is, they had each to bring in to the Romans a stated sum of money, each out of his own district, and to make their own profit out of the bargain by grinding out of the poor Jews all they could over and above; and most probably calling in the soldiery to help them if the people would not pay. So this was a trade, as you may easily see, which could only prosper by all kinds of petty extortion, cruelty, and meanness; and, no doubt, these publicans were devourers of the poor, and as unjust and hard-hearted men as could be. As for those "sinners" who are so often mentioned with them, I suppose this is what the word means:—These publicans, making their money ill, spent it ill also, in a low profligate way, with the worst of women and of men. Moreover, all the other Jews shunned them, and would not eat or keep company with them; so they hung all together, and made company for themselves with bad people, who were fallen too low to be ashamed of them. The publicans and harlots are often mentioned together; and, I doubt not, they were often eating and drinking together—God help them!

And God did help them. The Son of God came and ate and drank with them. No doubt he heard many words among them which pained his ears,—saw many faces which shocked his eyes; faces of women who had lost all shame; faces of men hardened by cruelty, and greediness, and cunning, till God's image had been changed into the likeness of the fox and the serpent; and, worst of all, the greatest pain to him of all, he could see into their hearts, their immortal souls, and see all the foulness within them, all the meanness, all the hardness, all the unbelief in anything good or true. And yet he ate and drank with them. Make merry with them he could not; who could be merry in such company? but he certainly so behaved to them that they were glad to have him among them, though he was so unlike them in every thought, and word, and look, and action.

And why? Because, though he was so unlike them in many things, he was like them at least in one thing. If he could do nothing else in common with them, he could at least eat and drink as they did, and eat and drink with them too. Yes. He was the Son of Man, the Man of all men, and what he wanted to make them understand was, that, fallen as low as they were, they were men and women still, who were made at first in God's likeness, and who could be redeemed back into God's likeness again.

The only way to do that was to begin with them in the very simplest way: to meet them on common human ground; to make them feel that, simply because they were men and women, he felt for them; that, simply because they were men and women, he loved them; that, simply because they were men and women, he could not turn his back upon them, for the sake of his Father and their Father in heaven. If he had left those poor wretches to themselves; if he had even merely kept apart from their common every-day life, and preached to them, they would never have felt that there was still hope for them, simply because they were men and women. They would have said in their hearts, "See, he will talk to us; but he looks down on us all the time, We are fallen so low, we cannot rise; we cannot mend." What is there in us that can mend? We are nothing but brutes, perhaps; then brutes we must remain. Heaven

is for people like him, perhaps, but not for such as us. We are cut off from men. We have no brothers upon earth, no Father in heaven. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

Yes, they may have said this; for people like them will say it too often now, here in Christian England.

But when our Lord came to them, ate and drank with them, talked with them in a homely and simple way (for our Lord's words are always simple and homely, grand, and deep, and wonderful as they are), then do you not see how *self-respect* would begin to rise in those poor sinners' hearts? Not that they would say "We are better men than we thought we were." No; perhaps his kindness would make them all the more ashamed of themselves, and convince them of sin the more deeply; for nothing, nothing melts the sinner's hard, proud heart, like a few unexpected words of kindness—aye, even a cordial shake of the hand from any one who he fancies looks down on him. To find a loving brother where he expected only a threatening schoolmaster—that breaks the sinner's heart; and most of all when he finds that brother in Jesus his Saviour. That—the sight of God's boundless love to sinners, as it is revealed in the loving face of Jesus Christ our Lord—that, and that alone, breeds in the sinner the broken and the contrite heart, which is in the sight of God of great price. And so, those publicans and sinners would not have begun to say, We are better than we thought; but, We can become better than we thought. He must see something in us which makes him care for us: perhaps God may see something in us to care for. He does not turn his back on us: perhaps God may not. He must have some hope of us: may we not have hope of ourselves? Surely there is a chance for us yet? Oh, if there were! We are miserable now in the midst of our drunkenness, and our covetousness, and our riotous pleasures. We are ashamed of ourselves; and our countrymen are ashamed of us; and though we try to brazen it off by impudence, we carry heavy hearts under bold foreheads. Oh, that we could be different! Oh, that we could be even like what we were when we were little children! Perhaps we may be yet. For he treats us as if we were men and women still, his brothers and sisters still. He thinks that we are not quite brute animals yet, it seems. Perhaps we are not; perhaps there is life in us yet, which may grow up to a new and better way of living. What shall we do to be saved?

My friends, let us try to follow his steps; let us remember all day long what it is to be *men:* that it is to have every one whom we meet for our brother in the sight of God; that it is this, never to meet any one, however bad he may be, for whom we cannot say, "Christ died for that man, and Christ cares for him still. He is precious in God's eyes; he shall be precious in mine also." Let us take the counsel of the Gospel for this day, and love one another, not in word merely—in doctrine, but in deed and in truth, really and actually; in our every-day lives and behaviour, words, looks—in all of them let us be cordial, feeling, pitiful, patient, courteous. Masters with your workmen, teachers with your pupils, parents with your children, be cordial, and kind, and patient; respect every one, whether below you or not in the world's eyes. Never do a thing to any human being which may lessen his self-respect; which may make him think that you look down on him, and so make him look down upon himself in awkwardness and shyness; or else may make him start off from you angry and proud, saying, "I am as good as you; and if you keep apart from me, I will from you; if you can do without me, I can do without you. I want none of your condescension." It is *not* so. You cannot do without each other. We can none of us do without the other; do not let us make any one fancy that he can, and tempt him to wrap himself up in pride and surliness, cutting himself off from the communion of saints, and the blessing of being a man among men.

And if any of you have a neighbour, or a relation, fallen into sin, even into utter shame—oh, for the sake of him who ate and drank with publicans and sinners, never cast them off, never trample on them, never turn your back upon them. They are miserable enough already, doubt it not. Do not add one drop to their cup of bitterness. They are ashamed of themselves already, doubt it not. Do not you destroy in them what small grain of self-respect still remains. You fancy they are not so. They seem to you brazen-faced, proud, impenitent. So did the publicans and harlots seem to those proud, blind Pharisees. Those pompous, self-righteous fools did not know what terrible struggles were going on in those poor sin-tormented hearts. Their pride had blinded them, while they were saying all along, "It is we alone who see. This people, which knoweth not the law, is accursed." Then came the Lord Jesus, the Son of man, who knew what was in man; and he spoke to them gently, cordially, humanely; and they heard him, and justified God, and were baptized, confessing their sins; and so, as he said himself, the publicans and harlots went into the kingdom of God before those proud, self-conceited Pharisees.

Therefore, I say, never hurt any one's self-respect. Never trample on any soul, though it may be lying in the veriest mire; for that last spark of self-respect is as its only hope, its only chance; the last seed of a new and better life; the voice of God, which still whispers to it, "You are not what you ought to be, and you are not what you can be. You are still God's child, still an immortal soul; you may rise yet and fight a good fight yet, and conquer yet, and be a man once more, after the likeness of God who made you, and Christ who died for you!" Oh, why crush that voice in any heart? If you do, the poor creature is lost, and lies where he or she falls, and never tries to rise again. Rather bear and forbear; hope all things, believe all things, endure all things. That was Christ's spirit: the fairest, the noblest spirit upon earth; the spirit of God, whose mercy is over all his works; and hereby shall we know that Christ abideth in us, by his having given us the same spirit of pity, charity, fellow-feeling, and love for every human being round us.

THOUGH ODD YET TRUE.

A Sermon, by the Rev. Mr. Moore, of Burston, in Norfolk.

Beloved, we are met together to solemnize the funeral of Mr. Proctor: his father's name was Mr. Thomas Proctor, of the second family; his brother's name also was Mr. Thomas Proctor; he lived some time at Burston Hall, in Norfolk, and was high constable of Diss hundred; this man's name was Mr. Robert Proctor, and his wife was Mrs. Buxton; late wife of Mr. Matthew Buxton; she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich.

He was a good husband and she a good housewife, and they two got money: she brought a thousand pounds with her for her portion.

But, now, beloved, I shall make it clear, by demonstrative arguments. First, he was a good man, and that in several respects: he was a loving man to his neighbours, a charitable man to the poor, a favourable man in his tithes, and a good landlord to his tenants; there sits one, Mr. Spurgeon, can tell what a great sum of money he forgave him upon his death-bed, it was four score pounds; now, beloved, was not this a good man, and a man of God, and his wife a good woman, and she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich. This is the first argument.

Secondly, to prove this man to be a good man, and a man of God: in the time of his sickness, which was long and tedious, he sent for Mr. Cole, Minister of Shimpling, to pray for him. He was not a self-ended man, to be prayed for himself only; no, beloved, he desired him to pray for all his relations and acquaintances, for Mr. Buxton's worship, and for all Mr. Buxton's children, against it should please God to send him any; and to Mr. Cole's prayers he devoutly said Amen, Amen, Amen; was not this a good man, and a man of God, think you, and his wife a good woman? and she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich.

Then he sent for Mr. Gibbs to pray for him; when he came and prayed for him, for all his friends, relations, and acquaintances; for Mr. Buxton's worship, for Mrs. Buxton's worship, and for all Mr. Buxton's children, against it should please God to send him any, and to Mr. Gibb's prayers he likewise devoutly said Amen, Amen, Amen; was not this a good man, a man of God, think you, and his wife a good woman? and she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich.

Then he sent for me, and I came and prayed for this good man, Mr. Proctor, for all his friends, relations, and acquaintances; for Mr. Buxton's worship, for Mrs. Buxton's worship, and for Mr. Buxton's children, against it should please God to send him any: and to my prayers he devoutly said Amen, Amen, Amen; was not this a good man, and a man of God, think you, and his wife a good woman? and she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich.

Thirdly and lastly, beloved, I come to a clear demonstrative argument to prove this man to be a good man, and a man of God, and that is this: there was one Thomas Proctor, a very poor beggar-boy, he came into this country upon the back of a dun cow, it was not a black cow, nor a brindled cow, nor a brown cow; no, beloved, it was a dun cow; well, beloved, this poor boy came a begging to this good man's door; he did not do as some would have done, give him a small alms and send him away, or chide him and make him a pass, and send him into his own country; no, beloved, he took him into his own house, and bound him an apprentice to a gunsmith in Norwich; after his time was out, he took him home again, and married him to a kinswoman of his wife's, one Mrs. Christian Robertson here present, there she sits; she was a very good fortune, and to her this good man gave a considerable jointure; by her he had three daughters; this good man took home the eldest, brought her up to woman's estate, married her to a very honourable gentleman, Mr. Buxton here present, there he sits: who gave him a vast portion with her, and the remainder of his estate he gave his two daughters. Now, was not this a good man, and a man of God, think you, and his wife a good woman? and she came from Helsdon-hall beyond Norwich.

Beloved, you may remember some time since, I preached at the funeral of Mrs. Proctor, all which time I troubled you with many of her transcendent virtues; but your memories perhaps may fail you, and therefore I shall now remind you of one or two of them.

The first is, she was a good knitter as any in the county of Norfolk: when her husband and family were in bed and asleep, she would get a cushion, clap herself down by the fire, and sit and knit; but, beloved, be assured she was no prodigal woman, but a sparing woman; for to spare candle, she would stir up the coals with her knitting-pins; and by that light she would sit and knit, and make as good work as many other women by daylight. Beloved, I have a pair of stockings on my legs that were knit in the same manner, and they are the best stockings that ever I wore in my life.

Secondly, she was the best maker of toast in drink that ever I eat in my life: and they were brown toasts too: for when I used to go in a morning she would ask me to eat a toast, which I was very willing to do because she had such an artificial way of toasting it, no ways slack nor burning it; besides she had such a pretty way of grating nutmeg and dipping it in the beer, and such a piece of rare cheese, that I must needs say that they were the best toasts that ever I eat in my life.

Well, beloved, the days are short, and many of you have a great way to your habitations, and therefore I hasten to a conclusion.

I think I have sufficiently proved this man to be a good man, and his wife a good woman; but fearing your memories should fail you, I shall repeat the particulars, viz.

1. His love to his neighbour. 2. His charity to the poor. 3. His favourableness in his tithes. 4. His goodness to his tenants. 5. His devotions in his prayers, in saying Amen! Amen! Amen! to the prayers of Mr. Cole, Mr. Gibbs, and myself.

REFORM IN NORWAY, SWEDEN, AND DENMARK.

THE seed of a more liberal and rational form of religion has been very plentifully sown in every nation of Christendom during the last few years, and now the blade appears and the full ear will come at length. In our own country the most popular and widely-read literature is urging the people on to a faith that works by love and purifies the heart, as the best and safest evidence of their Christianity. On the continent, we are told, Unitarianism is winning its way, not under this name, but doctrines with which we are in full sympathy. We have made this brief introduction to a leader from a Presbyterian contemporary, which points out and deplores a change going on in the more northern parts of Europe; we are glad to welcome signs of reform anywhere.

"The Churches of the three Scandinavian kingdoms, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, have generally been in so little communication with the rest of the Protestant world, that their religious and ecclesiastical condition is but very imperfectly known abroad. The establishment of biennial Scandinavian Church diets, of which three have been held from 1857 to 1861, has, however, of late drawn the attention of Protestant countries to a somewhat greater extent upon the doings of their brethren in Northern Europe. Among the proceedings of the diets was the reading of reports on the religious life in each of the three Scandinavian kingdoms; but, as far as they have become known abroad, these reports fail to convey a clear idea of the relative strength of the three great church parties, which more or less are found in every state church of Europe, and whose irreconcilable disputes will not cease until the connection between Church and State ceases, and each of the parties constitutes itself an independent church on the basis ot its principles.

"On the whole, the contest of the church parties has excited but little interest abroad. The best known of these controversies was that between the school of Grundvig and Old Church Lutherans in Denmark. Of late the Rationalistic controversy has again become prominent in Sweden, and it seems possible that it may lead to great results. It recommenced in December, 1860, when an aged clergyman of the diocese of Strengnæs, of the name of Hallin, addressed a letter to the consistories of his diocese, in which he expressed a doubt whether the doctrines of the divinity of Christ and of the atonement could be proved by the Bible, and proposed to lay these questions before a Church diet. In answer to this letter, the consistorium suspended him from his ministerial functions, and gave him three months to reconsider his opinions. When, after the expiration of this term, he was still unwilling to recant, he was deposed from his office. Hallin appealed from this decision to the head of the church, the king; but while the case was still in progress, Hallin died, at the beginning of the present year. The political press of Sweden and Norway have extensively discussed the case, and a considerable portion are taking side with Mr. Hallin. A paper of Gothenburg (the second town in Sweden) says the consistorium of the same diocese of Strengnæs in 1818 condemned Mr. Tybeck, a distinguished theologian, for teaching that God himself dwelt in Christ substantially. The Bishop of Gothenburg defended in a church paper the right of the Church to make her interpretation of the Bible the rule for her ministers; but to this the secular papers reply, that at present the congregations have to accept any preacher whom the king or the nobleman appoints, whatever may be his belief or disbelief: and that, according to the law, the king, not the bishop rules the Church.

"Beside Mr. Hallin, several other clergymen have come forward as advocates of Rationalistic views. Some of them are men of prominent position and influence in the Church. At Gothenburg, a paper in defence of Rationalism was read before the Literary and Scientific Society by Mr. Ljunberg, who is a member of the consistory. At Stockholm, Mr. Ignell, one of the ministers of the city, has been for many years a zealous disseminator of Rationalistic publications, and his influence on the public mind was expressly complained of in the report made at the last Scandinavian Church Diet on the religious life in Sweden. In the north, a minister celebrated for his critical scholarship, is well known to be a Rationalist of the most advanced school. There is no doubt that the people in the towns, to a very large extent, sympathize with these movements; so called "Reformatory Associations" are said to be rapidly spreading among them, and they will be the less inclined to listen to the theological instructions of the clergy, as they well know that the latter, by their advocacy of the worst kind of religious intolerance and ecclesiastical despotism, have lost the sympathies of nearly the entire Protestant world.

"Those of the clergy, on the other hand, who conceive it to be the duty of the Church not to tolerate within her border a departure from what are generally regarded as the cardinal points of evangelical Protestantism, look with some alarm on such cases of Rationalism as are now arising. A periodical conducted by the leading members of the High Church party expresses the opinion that a great and important crisis is before the Church; that either those who reject the Lutheran doctrine must leave and form a free Church, or if the rulers of the Church allow them to stay in, the national Church will be deserted by a great multitude of her most faithful ministers and friends, and the strict Lutherans will form an independent organization, after the example of the Free Church of Scotland and that of the separated Lutherans in Prussia. Thus the system of state-churchism is beginning to be shaken in Sweden, as it has been for many years all over Europe; and the fact that the very High Church party, which has until recently persecuted so cruelly every seceder from the State Church, thinks now itself of seceding, is the best proof that the entire system is approaching its downfall."

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

DEATH.—Death is the condition of our creation; it is a part of us, and whilst we endeavour to evade it, we avoid ourselves.

TWO BEAUTIES. — An Indian philosopher being asked what were, according to his opinion, the two most beautiful things in the universe, answered: — "The starry heavens above our heads, and the feeling of duty in our hearts."

THE HUMAN VOICE.—The interior diameter of the human throat is little and the length brief; but it will give the same note as the pipe of an organ *eight feet* long. The valve which covers it, and vibrates with electrical swiftness (imitated by the reed of the organ), is also a very little thing; yet, with the expansion and contraction of the throat, it will utter a scale of seventeen degrees, and divide every whole tone into a hundred parts!

NOT TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE.—It is often said that "Universalism is too good to be true." But how is this possible, when we consider that it treats of God's dealings with all his children? Can we form nobler conceptions of God than are warranted by Scripture? Can we exalt him too highly? "Too *good* to be true"! Is not endless misery "too *bad* to be true"? How can a God of infinite love punish *for ever?*—How is this possible? Is it "too good" to believe that "God so loved the world, that he sent his only-begotten Son, not to condemn it, but that the world through him might be saved"? Is it "too good" to believe that "God is love"? Is it "too good" to believe that "he will render to every man according to his works"?—that he is "a just God and a Saviour"? Is all this "too good to be true"? Is it not rather the fault of the world, that God has been degraded by false views of his character; that he has been dragged down from his high estate, and reduced to the level of heathen deities? Let it never be said that it is "too good" to believe that God loves, and will finally bless all his children.—*Trumpet.*

A SLAVE'S APPEAL TO GREAT BRITAIN.—Frederick Douglas, dating from Rochester, N.Y., U.S., November, 1862, has issued an appeal, headed as above. He thus concludes:—"The case is before you. No excuses, however plausible—no distances of time, however remote—no line of conduct, however excellent, will erase the deep stain upon your honour and truth, if, at this hour of dreadful trial, you interpose in a manner to defeat the emancipation of the American slaves. If at any time you could have intervened honourably in American affairs, it was when the Federal Government was vainly endeavouring to put down the rebellion without hurting slavery. That gloomy period ended on the 22nd September, 1862. From that day our war has been invested with a sanctity which will smite, as with death, even the mailed hand of Britain, if outstretched to arrest it. Let this conflict go on; there is no doubt of the final result; and, though it is a dreadful scourge, it will make justice, humanity, and liberty permanently possible in this country."

THE GODS OF ANTIQUITY.—According to this theory, the ancients looked upon all nature as animated and sympathetic, and—just as a child beckons smilingly to its own likeness reflected in a glass, or beats with impotent fury the ground on which it falls—so it is supposed that the first men invested everything with their own attributes, because experience had not yet gifted them with the power of discrimination. The myth, as it has been observed, had no real meaning, except for that antique epoch when ignorant men believed themselves to be in a divine world, and had not yet learnt to distinguish between the outward and the inward. Hence the gods were supposed to inherit the same infirmities and vices as these savage men. In the Homeric records we find these personages sleeping and eating, now animated by a warlike ardour, and now quarreling in ferocious discord. The political constitution of Olympus resembled that of Greece, and the habits of domestic life were supposed to be the same. Nor did these immortals shrink from the commonest duties. The goddesses laboured at their toilets, and fed their horses with oats from the celestial stables. The immortal condition was far from protecting these singular deities from physical suffering. —*Eclectic Review.*

A WORD FROM NEW ZEALAND.—Bishop Selwyn, in the general synod at Wellington, deploring the fetters of state that bind Churches, said—"We can have no enemies from without; we ought to have no enmities from within. We shall not have to cut and shape our stones to fit them into spaces narrowed out by private interests or vested rights of property; we may take them at once as they have been made ready for us in God's Holy Word, and build without regard to any other model than the example of our blessed Lord and his apostles. Do we then boast ourselves against our Mother Church in thus abandoning some part of our present system? on the contrary, we desire as faithful children to show, so far as God may give us grace, how glorious she might have been in the purity of her doctrines and in the holiness of her liturgy if she had been *released from those chains* from which the peculiar circumstances of the Colonial Church *have set us free.* The abuses of private patronage, the sale of spiritual offices, inequality of measures, the failure of all corrective discipline over the beneficed clergy, the heartrending injustice of dilapidations,—all springing from the same root of private property: these are no part of the Church of England, and they must have no place here. We should be guilty indeed, if, with our eyes open and a free choice before us, we should engraft upon our new branch of the Church of England the same abuses against which the Preachers at St. Paul's Cross and Whitehall remonstrated in vain."

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